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JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Miss. Baptists shelter, feed Ivan victims

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

Mississippi Baptist churches all across the state opened their doors to evacuees fleeing the wrath of Hurricane Ivan, while the Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Task Force headed into the storm area to feed thousands of people without food and electricity.

According to a survey by The Baptist Record, a total of 43 Mississippi Baptist churches sheltered nearly 2,700 people from the Gulf Coast areas of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida as Ivan moved inland in the pre-dawn hours of September 16. The Task Force was on the road to the Gulf Coast shortly after noon on the same day.

"I was amazed at the overwhelming response of church members and the community to the needs of the evacuees," said Andy Pittman, pastor of First Church, Canton, where more than 50 people rode out the storm in the Family Life Center. "A lot of God things happened."

Pittman said church members poured into the shelter with food and other provisions for the evacuees — including heavy moving blankets for bedding and kennel facilities for pets. Many other individuals and businesses in the community also provided support for the shelter operation.

"It's a sin to be so busy 'going to church' that we neglect people really in need, like these evacuees who didn't have anywhere to go and didn't have time to bring a lot with them," Pittman said. "I'm proud of this church and community. We'll do it again."



PRODUCTION LINE — Members of the Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Task Force prepare sandwiches at Camp Garaywa in Clinton on September 16, to be distributed to Hurricane Ivan evacuees sheltering in the Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson. Workers included (clockwise, from left) Ronald Swaggart, member of Briar Hill Church, Florence; Vernon Botelot, member of Briar Hill Church, Florence; Bobby Kennedy, member of Pearl Valley Church, Wesson; Paulette May, member of First Church, Brandon; Dixie Kennedy, member of Pearl Valley Church, Wesson; and Kaye Bounds, member of Crossgates Church, Brandon. (BR photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

FOOD FOR VICTIMS — Bobby Kennedy (left), member of Pearl Valley Church, Wesson, and Vernon Botelot (right), member of Briar Hill Church, Florence, empty a tilt skillet of beef stew into an insulated container on September 18 for delivery to Meridian-area victims of Hurricane Ivan. David Warren (background), a member of Eagle Lake Church, Vicksburg, stands by to assist. (BR photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)



Meanwhile, the Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Task Force idled at Camp Garaywa in Clinton on September 16, waiting for the go-ahead signal to enter the storm-ravaged area. The unit was deployed to Pascagoula and then Meridian. The Task Force's mass feeding unit worked from the parking lot of Rush Memorial Hospital in Meridian through the evening meal on September 18.

Task Force volunteers are currently in Orange Beach, Alabama, where they are helping prepare meals at a Salvation Army mobile kitchen that was already set up and running in that hard-hit area.

Fully 100% of gifts designated for the Task Force are used for specific, on-site disaster relief needs. Gifts to the Margaret Lackey State Missions Offering and the Mississippi Cooperative Program provide the annual funding for the unit's maintenance, repair, and training.

To make a tax-deductible gift toward Mississippi Baptists' disaster relief efforts, make checks payable to Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and designate "2004 Hurricane Relief" on the memo line. Mail to Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, ATTN: Business Office, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

For frequent updates while the Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Task Force is activated, visit www.mbc.org.



FILL'ER UP — Dixie Kennedy (left) a member of Pearl Valley Church, Wesson, and Letha Warren, a member of Eagle Lake Church, Vicksburg, prepare a large quantity of drinks to accompany the meal being prepared on September 18 by the Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Task Force for the victims of Hurricane Ivan in the Meridian area. (BR photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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Respect the will of the people

For the second time in little more than a month, the American people have spoken loudly and clearly about same-sex marriage. It's time some of our politicians and judges got the unmistakable message.

By a vote of 78% in favor, Louisiana voters on September 18 passed a state constitutional amendment defining marriage as the "union of one man and one woman." The amendment also bans activist judges and pandering public officials from recognizing same-sex marriages from other states.

On August 4, Missouri voters approved a similar state constitutional amendment with 71% of the vote, even though a well-organized group opposed to the amendment raised more than \$360,000 for television ads and get-out-the-vote activities.

A total of 13 states will have voted on similar measures by the time this fall's election cycle is complete, and the prospects for passage are promising in each instance. In addition to Missouri and Louisiana, states slating votes on constitutional amendments or initiatives to ban same-sex marriage include:

- Mississippi
- Arkansas
- Georgia
- Kentucky
- Michigan
- Montana
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Oregon
- Utah

Meanwhile, activist judges in places like Massachusetts, Washington state, and California continue to flaunt the people's will by striking down any and all laws banning same sex marriage. Pandering public officials in Congress, statehouses, and city halls persist in pushing their immoral agenda that unfailingly includes same-sex marriage.

Such people obviously see themselves

as being above the will of the people.

The homosexual rights movement has for years attempted to persuade us that homosexuals, lesbians — and now, the "transgendered," are a legal minority in need of constitutional protection from the tyranny of the majority. Too many judges and politicians have bought it, but the public has not.

Hence, the overwhelming voter support for a traditional definition of marriage that has been acknowledged and practiced for more than 5,000 years. In this respect, marriage isn't broke. It doesn't need fixing.

Among opponents of the constitutional bans, the same tired excuse is offered — it's all the fault of those pesky Christians. "The Christian Coalition did an excellent job of deceiving the Legislature," said Randy Evans of New Orleans, a spokesman for the pro-homosexual Equality Political Action Committee, in expressing sour grapes toward lawmaker's bow to the public will in sending the issue to the voters.

Now you know why they hate us so deeply, why they want to banish us from every public forum, and why they ridicule us in the elitist mainstream media. We are a threat to their radical agenda.

Could it possibly be that the supporters of homosexual rights are on the wrong side of the issue; that the average American out here in flyover country

"IF YOU'RE NOT GOING TO PROTECT THE FAMILY, YOU MAY AS WELL SHUT THIS PLACE DOWN!"



doesn't want to upend a bedrock institution like marriage; and that — at least in this instance — the voice of the people has been heard and understood?

That's really the last thing the pro-homosexual lobby wants to contemplate, and why many such groups have already promised challenges to the new constitutional amendments in homosexual-friendly courts when the amendments are approved by voters.

So be it. When that time comes, however, may Christians rise up and say in one booming pronouncement, "What part of 'no' don't you understand?"

GUEST OPINION:



The willing spirit of Mississippi Baptists

By Billy & Rebecca Williams
Broadmoor Church, Madison

we did not promote missions. I went on my first mission trip this year and I love missions. I want to learn more about all of our offerings. Yes, please send the materials."

We discovered there was hardly a church that had not benefited in one way or the other from the many ministries funded by the Margaret Lackey State Mission Offering. Several churches had received financial assistance for mission trips. One pastor shared his deep appreciation for the offering. Forced to leave a former church without a place of service, he stated, "We were seen through those difficult days by the Mississippi Baptist Convention and funds from the Margaret Lackey State Mission Offering. I will always

be grateful for the assistance and encouragement at that time."

We had difficulty reaching many of the pastors by phone. The reason: a great number of our pastors are bi-vocational or they serve churches that do not have secretaries. They serve faithfully often with few resources. Thank the Lord for men who because of their secular jobs are enabled to pastor churches unable to support a pastor full-time.

As we spoke with the pastors and women of the smaller churches, they often mentioned their size. We reminded them that the majority of Mississippi Baptist churches are small. The Mississippi Baptist Convention received reports from 1,935 churches in 2003. Of these

reporting churches, 1,501 of them had an average Sunday School attendance of 100 or less, or 77.5%. Of the 77.5%, 1,024 churches averaged fifty or less.

One precious lady reflects the attitude of the vast number of these churches when she said, "We are just a small church but we love to learn about missions. We always give to the mission offerings. I know it's not much but we want to do our part."

That is the secret as to why and how Mississippi Baptists have been leaders in the Southern Baptist Convention in mission giving — most churches, whatever their size, desire to do their part.

We are completing our task with a renewed appreciation for Mississippi Baptists. They love and support missions. We feel good about the possibility of achieving our \$1,650,000 goal. We are proud to be a part of the Mississippi Baptist family.

Billy Williams is the retired former pastor of Gautier Church, Gautier. Rebecca Williams is a former president of the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union.

Church/political guidelines enumerated

McLEAN, Va. (BP) — Since the inception of the federal income tax in 1913, Congress has granted churches an exemption from paying this tax. However, in 1954, Congress enacted an additional condition for maintaining Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3) exempt status: a prohibition from engaging in "any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office." This article addresses in FAQ format questions commonly raised by churches concerning this issue.

Q: How much political campaign activity is permissible for a tax-exempt church?

A: None. Section 501(c)(3) provides an absolute prohibition on churches from participating or intervening in any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office. This absolute prohibition on politicking is in contrast to the limited amount of lobbying activities in which a tax-exempt church can engage.

Q: Hasn't Congress changed the law recently to make it legal for churches to be involved in political campaign activity?

A: Recent efforts to amend Section 501(c)(3) so that tax-exempt churches are no longer subject to an absolute prohibition on political activities, such as the Houses of Worship Political Speech Protection Act, have yet to garner sufficient support in Congress. If such legislation should pass, it likely will not be a blank check on politicking but provide for limited exceptions to the blanket prohibition.

Q: Is a church allowed to encourage its members and others to vote?

A: Yes. Nonpartisan encouragement of members to be responsible citizens who vote and take an interest in the political process is not prohibited political campaign activity. A church also may organize voter registration campaigns, provid-

The authors of this article, George R. "Chip" Grange, Stephen H. King, and Stephen S. Rao are attorneys with Gammon & Grange, P.C., McLean, Va., which serves as legal counsel for the Southern Baptist Ethics & Liberty Commission. Grange is the managing owner of Gammon & Grange, P.C. This article constitutes legal information and is not legal advice. The information in this article is current as of the date of publication. Because the relevant laws may have changed since that time, you should not rely upon this information, but rather should consult legal counsel. The authors may be contacted regarding the content of this article and any other questions regarding tax-exempt church issues at grg@gg-law.com, shk@gg-law.com and sss@gg-law.com, respectively.

ed that the campaigns are strictly nonpartisan. Our law firm has been engaged in providing guidance on the iVoteValues.com campaign of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Committee to ensure that it is fully compliant with Internal Revenue Code provisions for tax-exempt organizations.

Q: Does the political campaign prohibition prevent churches from taking stands on moral issues?

A: Tax law does not prohibit a church from teaching about moral issues and advocating biblical values. However, such teaching and advocacy may not include expression of support for a particular political candidate or party.

Q: Is a pastor allowed to endorse or raise funds for a particular candidate in his personal capacity?

A: Yes, pastors and other church leaders are free to become involved in their individual capacities in political campaigns so long as they do so without using the church's financial resources, facilities or personnel either directly or indirectly. Also, they must clearly and unambiguously indicate that their actions and statements are on their own behalf and not on behalf of the church. In contrast, a minister's endorsement of a candidate at an official church function or in an official church publication, even with a disclaimer, would violate the politicking prohibition, since the audience and the media of communication are created and subsidized by the church.

Q: Has the IRS ever penalized a church for political campaign activity?

A: Yes, the IRS revoked the tax-exempt status of a church in Binghamton, N.Y., for its placement in two national newspapers of a partisan political advertisement opposing the presidential candidacy of Bill Clinton four days prior to the 1992 presidential election. Our firm has been involved in defending churches tagged by the IRS for politicking. All have ended in settlements without loss of tax-exempt status.

Q: Is a church allowed to distribute voter guides?

A: Yes. A church may distribute voting records, candidate surveys and other voter guides so long as they are nonpartisan and do not indicate a preference towards any particular candidate or party. Voter guides are more likely to be considered nonpartisan if they cover all candidates, address a wide variety of issues and do not compare candidate positions with positions of the church, and otherwise do not indicate bias.

Q: May a church provide political candidates with a forum for speeches and debates?

A: A 1974 IRS ruling concerning a broadcasting station held that a tax-exempt organization could provide airtime to qualified candidates for public office, so long as it made such time equally available to all candidates. The station had expressed that the candidates' views were not necessarily those of the station and that the presentation was a public service to educate its viewers. Similarly, a church may provide a public forum to

political candidates as long as all candidates are invited and the church carefully avoids indicating its own views, commenting on candidates' statements or otherwise implying endorsement of or opposition to any candidate.

Q: What options, if any, exist for a church to engage in political campaign activity?

A: A church may establish a related, though separate 501(c)(4) organization to promote "social welfare." Such organizations are exempt from federal income taxation, but unlike their 501(c)(3) counterparts, contributions to them are not tax-deductible. Although subject to limits, a 501(c)(4) entity is not totally barred from political campaign activities, and a 501(c)(4) may form a political action committee (PAC) that would be free

Record

to participate in political campaigns, a church setting up such affiliated entities must carefully ensure that no church funds or other resources are used to support the entities engaged in political campaign activities.

Q: What are prohibited political campaign activities?

A: Among the political campaign activities that Section 501(c)(3) prohibits a church from engaging in, directly or indirectly, are the following: endorsing, supporting or opposing any political candidate; permitting a church trustee, pastor, other officer, employee or representative to use his or her position, or the reputation or resources of the church, to endorse, support or oppose a candidate or make any statements to encourage its members to vote for or against a particular candidate or party; contributing to or fundraising for the campaign of any candidate, party or PAC; permitting the facilities, name, reputation or resources of the church to be used (for prohibited political purposes).

Looking back

10 years ago

In a surprise move, trustees of Samford University in Birmingham vote to elect their own successors — a prerogative granted to the Alabama Baptist Convention since 1845. Trustees argue the move is necessary to protect the school from takeover.

20 years ago

Larry Braidfoot, general counsel for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission in Nashville, warns that lottery companies are on the march nationwide — including Mississippi — and they have millions of dollars to spend to legalize the game of chance.

50 years ago

The seven members of the W. A. Diffey family at Trinity Church, Vicksburg, attend every regular service of the church for a year, including Sunday School, morning worship, Training Union, Wednesday night prayer meeting service, and Family Night on Friday night.



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

THE
SECOND
FRONT PAGE

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Bibliocipher

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EKL WSTGT EKTHSASL EKL
TEZL GKNM RZD, YSN
NRSS JSRZKL DS, TENEK:
PMA ZN ZT HAZNSK,
NRMG TREVN HMATRZU
NRS VMAL NRO YML, EKL
RZD MKVO TREVN NRMG
TSACS.

VGBS PMGA: SZYRN

Clue: J = B

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Mark 16:16



YOU CAN RESPOND RIGHT NOW!

*Simply share the following
prayer with God in
your own words:*

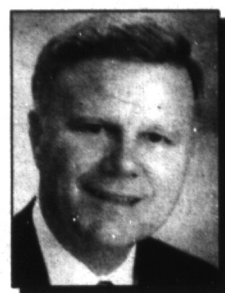
1. Lord, I admit that
I need you.
(*I have sinned.*)
 2. I want forgiveness for my
sins and freedom from eternal
death.
(*I repent.*)
 3. I believe Jesus died and
rose from the grave to
forgive my sins and to restore
my relationship with you.
(*I believe in Jesus.*)
 4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ
into my life. From this time on,
I want to live in a
loving relationship with Him.
(*I receive Christ as my
Savior and Lord.*)
- But as many as received him, to
them he gave the right to
become children of God, even to
those who believe in his name
(John 1:12).*

*If you make a decision for
Jesus Christ today, contact
a local Baptist church for
spiritual guidance.*

FIXING THE DELIVERY SYSTEM

For the other parts of the state that may not be aware of this fact, Northeast Mississippi is one of the prime furniture producing areas of our nation. Feeders and fingers of this industry reach all across our state and have been a strong part of our economy. Recently, I was a part of a meeting to which I was not invited, was not a participant, and personally had no interest. There I was sitting in a hotel with a cup of coffee and a bite of continental breakfast on the edge of a gathering of consultants that had been brought together in a rather urgent crisis mode. Their President, or CEO, or however they refer to the top man in their organization, was there. The people who had gathered around him were company representatives from various points across the nation. One guy had come in from a Midwestern state, another from a Mid-Atlantic state, one from the Northeast, and one had come from another Southern point. The reason I know this is because they were introducing themselves to each other and telling where they were from. They all seemed to know of each other, had some general knowledge of who they were, and how they fit into the organization, but they were not friends.

Quickly and clearly stated at the meeting was the reason that they had been brought to Northeast Mississippi. Something was happening to the delivery system and the product being manufactured at various locations across the state was not getting on the trucks or trains and arriving at the destination in time to meet the customers' demands. Now, here is the interesting thing. There was absolutely nothing wrong with the manufacturing of the product, the quality, or even the demand for the product. These men who were



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

brought together were not there for quality control of the product itself. The problem was that the product was not reaching the people who needed and wanted it.

While some of the guys who were there had just arrived, others had already been to the manufacturing sites and were ready to give preliminary reports of what they had found. I stayed only long enough to finish my cup of coffee and bite to eat and had to get on about my business. I left with the concern, urgency, and determination to make a difference in the process whirling around in my brain. As I had sat there listening to this meeting that was out in the open forum, I thought not about furniture, but I thought about the Gospel. I thought about the Good News that Jesus Christ has given His life so that people can live forever and that He rose again and is alive today wanting to save and wanting and willing to work through His people.

I recognize with confident assurance that there is nothing whatsoever wrong with our product. While there are many who would want to make a difference in lives and would wish that they could transform people with good ideas and positive, psychological approaches, maybe even other religious events, nobody anywhere can do for the human being what Jesus Christ does when He takes away our sin and comes to live in us. Jesus is the Savior,

the Messiah sent from God, and the Hope that every person longs for. Jesus can and does make a difference! So, if the world needs Jesus and Jesus has the answer for not only their sin problem, but every need in their life, then what has happened to the delivery system?

The "think tank" group that was trying to figure out why the furniture wasn't getting where it was supposed to be, heard from a couple of the guys who had gotten there early and had already been on the scene. They had discovered two things. One, the people who were in charge of shipment and delivery simply worked an eight-hour day and went home. Although the furniture had been built, was ready for shipment, and the orders were there to be filled, the workers had simply come, filled their orders, and left. Two, the second thing that they discovered was that the people who worked for or with them had picked up on their unconcern and apathy and had no sense whatsoever of their importance to the organization.

I almost spilled my coffee as I sat three chairs away from where they were talking and softly, under my breath, said, "Amen!"

Have you seen that experi-

ence in church? Please God, deliver us and change us as pastors, leaders, staff, and concerned Christians from just being people who do a job and chalk-up hours to a people who are consumed with the fulfillment of a mission! We are called to a work that requires a God empowered energy and a heaven endowed passion. The Lord did not call us simply to fill an eight-hour day, but to fill the world with the Good News of His saving Son. Beyond that, each of us who has been called to help make sure that the distribution takes place needs to convey to everyone around us that this is important business! This is God's business! This is eternal business! This will make a difference in people's lives now and forever!

There is a fascinating question found in the book of Haggai that may bring insight as to where we are. In Chapter 2:9, the question is raised, "Is the seed yet in the barn?" Mark it down! If the seed is not taken out, put in the ground, watered, nurtured, and cultivated, there will never be a harvest! For the men who gathered at the breakfast meeting the question was, "Is the furniture yet on the loading docks?" For us, who truly desire to see a world come to Christ, the question may be, "Is the witness we are to bear still in the church?" Or maybe, more accurately, "Is the Jesus we have come to know just kept in reserve in our hearts?" Let Him out! Let Him flow through you! Share His love and His life with somebody today!

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33rd Annual Church Library Ministry Conference October 1 & 2, 2004

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Friday, 9am - 8:15 pm & Saturday, 8am - 12:15 pm

Dinner Speaker - Robin Gunn, Portland, Oregon

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Suzanne Burton, Huntsville, Alabama • Stephen Gateley, Nashville, Tennessee •
Rita Kirkland, Euless, Texas • Carolyn Walker, Chickamauga, Georgia

Cost per person - \$20. The registration fee includes lunch, dinner, and registration packet.

Make checks payable to the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and mail to
Communication Services, PO Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

For more info, contact Communication Services at 601-292-3378 or 800-748-1651.

REVIVAL & HOMECOMING DATES

Duck Hill, Duck Hill: Revival September 26-29; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., noon luncheon and 7 p.m.; Barry Corbett, First, Kosciusko, evangelist; Billy Nelson, Macedonia, Petal, music; Travis Gray, pastor.

Academy, Blue Mountain: Homecoming September 26; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; noon meal; singing, 1:30 p.m.; James West, preaching; The Landmarks, singing; Earl Barron, pastor.

Weathersby, Mendenhall: Homecoming and Sanctuary Dedication October 3; worship, 10:30 a.m.; a covered dish meal will follow; all are invited.

North Columbia, Columbia: Revival September 26-29; Sunday, 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Mark Strum, First, Raymond, preaching; John Reid, Mt. Horeb, Collins, music; nursery provided; all are invited; Mike Grenn, pastor.

Hope, Neshoba County: Homecoming and Revival September 26-29; Sunday, 10:30 a.m. and lunch at noon; Sunday-Wed., 7 p.m.; Eugene Dobbs, guest speaker; William Crenshaw and Scottie Goldman, music; Dennis Duvall, pastor.

Good Hope, Batesville: 150th Anniversary October 17; worship, 10 a.m.; lunch provided; Charles Stubblefield, Al Mullan, Lee Hudson, and Bobby McKay, speakers; Gerald H. Walker, pastor.

Tillatoba, Tillatoba: Homecoming September 26; worship, 10:30 a.m.; dinner and fellowship will follow; Eddie Prince, Oak Grove, Hernando, guest speaker; Harvey Vance, pastor; all are invited.

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Dr. Don M. Boone, pastor
FBC Louisville, MS

Jericho, Guntown: Revival September 26-29; Sun., 10 a.m., meal following, and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Rickey Blythe, First, Flora, speaker; Billy Joe DeVaughn, music; Marvin Robbins, pastor.

Bassfield, Bassfield: 100th Anniversary October 3; worship, 10 a.m.; dinner on the grounds will follow; Randy Gardner, preaching; John Greene, music; all are invited; Ken Roberts, pastor.

Bethel, Drew: Revival September 26-29; Sunday, 11 a.m.; nightly, 7 p.m.; James Lindsey, Southside, Beniot, guest speaker; James and Vickie Lindsey, music; Lyle Ward, pianist; Larry Chouccoli, pastor; all are invited.

Shady Grove, Bogue Chitto: 150th Anniversary October 3; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; dinner on the grounds at noon; activities with a picture, 1:30 p.m.; Chip Price, preaching; John Pratt, pastor.

North Morton, Morton: Homecoming September 26; worship, 10:30 a.m.; a hot meal will be served at noon; singing will follow; Paul Smith, preaching; The Heartmans, singing.

First Church, Belzoni: Weekend of Renewal October 23-24; Roy McHenry, preaching; Jim Worthing, singing; George C. Johnson, pastor.

The women's ministry of **Castlewoods Church, Brandon**, will have a Dinner and Fashion Show, A Fall Fashion Cornucopia, October 19 at 6:30 p.m. featuring church, career, casual, cruise fashions, and entertainment. Clothing will be furnished by McRae's, Dogwood Mall. Tickets are \$6. Call (601) 992-9977 for more information. Brian Richardson is pastor.

Lee Emling Harding, Clinton, has been named interim chair of the Mississippi College Department of English. Harding graduated from MC and USM. She served on the MC faculty since 1975 as a professor in the English Department.

The **Mississippi College 2004-05 SGA Officers** have been named. Pictured from left are (front) Women's Affairs Board Chairperson Jennifer Wyckoff, Locust Grove, Ok.; Secretary Courtney Church, Germantown, Tenn.; Campus Activities Board Chairperson Brooke Malpass, Clinton; Chief Justice Elizabeth Barger, Indianola; (back) Vice President Christopher Moore, Byram; Men's Affairs Board Chairperson Griffin Lewis, Kosciusko; President Mike Robertson, River Ridge, La.; Treasurer Chris Price, McComb; and Chief of Staff Myrt Hales III, Rayville, La.

Blue Mountain College and Lowrey Memorial Church hosted the 2004 Healthy Church, Blue Mountain, Conference sponsored by the Northeast Mississippi Pastors' Conference September 13. Pastors from Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, and Georgia focused on elements of healthy churches. Jim Futral, MBCB, pictured with Tina Barkley and Ronald Meeks, was one of the guest speakers.

Blue Mountain College senior education majors **Rae Brooks**, Corinth, and **Sandy Thompson**, Rienzi, have been named recipi-

ents of state and national Kappa Kappa Iota scholarships. At state level, they shared the Imogene Haddon Scholarship. The National Kappa Kappa Iota awards four scholarships to Campus Chapters across the nation. Brooks and Thompson received two of the coveted Sara Sunderman Campus Scholarships awarded by this group.



Rae Brooks and Sandy Thompson



Mississippi College 2004 - 2005 SGA Officers



Jim Futral, MBCB; Tina Barkley and Ronald Meeks

JUST FOR THE RECORD

Crossgates Church, Brandon, will present 40 Days of Purpose September 26-November 7. For more information, call (601) 825-2562.

The **Women's Ministry of Moselle Memorial Church, Moselle**, will host a luncheon September 25 at 10 a.m. Tickets are \$10 and door prizes will be given away. Reggie and Lady Love Smith, who perform with the Gaithers, will be in charge.

For more information, call (601) 582-9428. Keith M. Thompson is pastor.

Washington Church, Natchez, exceeded their goal of \$1,200 for the Margaret Lackey State Missions Offering by giving a total of \$2,015 during the Missions March August 29. Terry L. Upchurch is pastor.

Goss Church, Columbia, will participate in the 40 Days

of Purpose campaign. A simulcast with Rick Warren will begin September 25 at 4:30 p.m. All are invited. For more information, call (601) 736-9563. Mark McArthur is pastor.

Shuler Brown will present his testimony October 3 at **Wheeler Grove Church, Corinth**, at 11 a.m. Alternative services for younger ones will be held and the nursery will be provided. All are welcome.

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MISSISSIPPI STAFF POSITIONS

MAIN STREET BAPTIST CHURCH, Goodman, Miss., is currently seeking a full-time pastor. A traditional SBC, resident membership 95. Send resumes or contact to Main Street Baptist Church, pastor search committee, Billy May, chairman, P.O. Box 206, Goodman, MS 39079.

STAFF POSITIONS IN JACKSON church, music minister: lead traditional worship, direct adult, children's choirs. Also, minister of education with duties in outreach and children's ministry. Possibly combine these positions into full-time position for right person. Send inquiries to personnel committee, P.O. Box 13675, Jackson, MS 39236 by September 29.

IS MUSIC YOUR MINISTRY? Do you have a heart for youth? Immanuel Baptist Church, Vicksburg, Miss., is accepting resumes for minister of music/youth/education. Send to person-

nel committee chairman, Immanuel Baptist Church, 6949 Hwy 61 South, Vicksburg, MS 39180.

CHURCH PIANIST NEEDED, Grandview Baptist Church, 900 South Pearson Rd., Pearl, Miss. 39208. Wednesdays 7:30 - 8:30 pm and Sundays 10:30 am - 11:30 am and 6:30 pm. \$100 per week. Please contact Mike Hennington at (601) 624-9389 or call the church office at (601) 939-4215.

CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH, Pascagoula, Miss., is accepting resumes for a full-time minister of music and youth. Must be willing to work in both areas of ministry and be able to work with choirs. Resumes can be sent to P.O. Box 2278, Pascagoula, MS 39569. Or can be emailed to pastorjohnny@bellsouth.net. Anyone with questions call (228) 762-1338.

JUST FOR THE RECORD

Staff Changes

Slayden Church, Lamar, called **David Bishop** as pastor effective September 12. He is a graduate of Blue Mountain College and currently attends NOBTS. Bishop comes from Kilmichael Church, Kilmichael.



Bishop

Anthony Langley, Pascagoula, was called as pastor of First Church, Byhalia, August 29. He has served there for four years as youth and education minister and interim pastor. Langley is a graduate of NOBTS and currently attends Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky.



Langley

Parkway Church, Kosciusko, has called **Don Cook** as pastor. He has served Remus Church, Leake County, for the past ten years.

Good Hope Church, Leake County, has called **Curtis Price** as pastor.

Cross Roads Church, Pelahatchie, recently called two ministries to their staff. Aaron Reynolds serves as minister of youth and Dennis Basden is the minister of music. Pictured (from left) are Basden, Reynolds, and John Vaughn, pastor.

Ralph Windle has retired (front) as pastor of Mt. Zion Church, Columbus. He is available for pulpit supply and serving as an interim pastor. Windle can be reached at (662) 327-9717.



Windle

Youth and children of **Pope Church, Pope**, recently attended State Bible Drill in Hardin and John Meek, inter-Batesville. Pictured (from left, im pastor, challenged the church through Debt No More in 04. Joel Strahan, former music director, was the guest speaker. A celebration meal followed.



Enterprise Church Bible Drill Participants, Enterprise

Slayden Church, Marshall/Lafayette Association, held a note burning July 11. The building program began in 1992 with Bill Batesville. Pictured (from left, im pastor, challenged the church through Debt No More in 04. Joel Strahan, former music director, was the guest speaker. A celebration meal followed.

The Acteens of **First Church, Senatobia**, were recognized for their efforts in mission support, mission action, and mission education. Pictured (from left) are Michel Jarjoura and



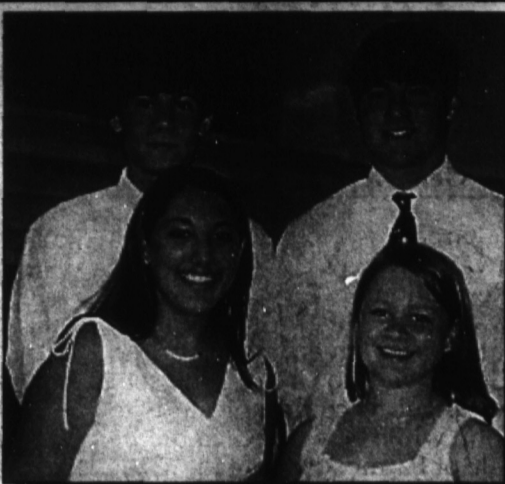
Youth Bible Drill Participants of Pope Church, Pope



Dennis Basden, Aaron Reynolds, and John Vaughn, pastor

Chelsea Bailey, accompanied by their escorts, Isaac Moore and Bart Allen.

Henry G. West, Jr. recently celebrated his 63rd anniversary as a Baptist Minister. He is a native of Ecru Church, Ecru. His early pastorates include Zion Hill, Jericho, Liberty, Ingomar, Union County; Belden, Tupelo 2nd, Euclatubba, Lee County; and Zion, Pontotoc County. West is pictured with his wife, Viana.



Acteens of First Church, Senatobia

Enterprise Church, Enterprise, recently participated in Bible Drill. Pictured (from left, front) are Annedrea Mcmillan, Bethany Mercer, Haley Mercer, Andi Katherine Kersh, Lindsey Mercer, Cassidy Lee, Chelsea Jordan, (back) Tyler Burgess, Ryan Moore, and Christian Lee. Richard Cothorn is pastor.



Henry and Viana West



Note Burning of Slayden Church, Marshall/Lafayette Assn.

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FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Encouraged by Knowing God

Revelation 1:1-6; 9-18

By Geneva England

Great joy and blessings await believers who read the Revelation of God and heed its warnings. This prophetic revelation was given in this order: God gave it to Christ, who sent an angel to communicate it to John while he was exiled on the Isle of Patmos for spreading the Gospel (vv.1-3, 9). God instructed John to "write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which shall be hereafter" (v.19). To accomplish this, John was caught up "in the spirit" (v.10). This divine revelation, or unveiling, is now available for our edification.

Even John's receiving the prophecy on the "Lord's Day," or first day of the week, gains significance when we understand that God is revealing the new covenant rather than the old covenant. Jesus Christ is the ful-

fillment of the Old Testament [covenant], and through His redemptive act, all sinners may come to a saving knowledge of our Lord and Savior.

When God refers to Himself as the "Alpha and the Omega, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty" (v.8), He covers the entire span of human existence, as well as before and after. Thus, studying Revelation helps everyone know God better because humankind has been, are being, and will be affected by its teachings. The Almighty, who reigns over life and death, is coming in power and glory (v.18). He rules from the beginning to the end.

In verse 4, John specifically greets the seven churches in Asia. Since numerology is inherent in the Hebrew nation with seven being the number of perfection and completion, it follows that the seven churches



England

are literal churches at the time of John's writing; but, secondly, these seven churches also represent the totality of all Christianity. In fact, Scofield and others suggest that the seven churches chronologically represent the historical stages of Christianity up to our

present Laodicean mentality, which says, "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing"; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Rev. 3:17).

The Hebrews attached a special religious significance to the number seven, such as the seven days of creation, the Sabbatical rule for the land, the day of Sabbath, and the sevens in Revelation. Moreover, the seven Spirits represent God in all His might, particularly, the Trinity with the inclusion of "Jesus Christ, the faithful witness and firstborn from the dead"; God the Father; and the sevenfold Spirit (vv.4-5). In Revelation 4:5 God seemingly identifies His seven spirits when His judgment

proceeds from His throne in Heaven as "lightnings and thunders and voices."

This powerful portrayal of God gives us several blessings: first, it magnifies the One who is able to redeem us from eternal damnation and separation from God. Jesus Christ loved us and shed His blood on the cross in order to free us from our sins (v.5).

Another blessing is our being made "priests" to serve God (v.6). We enjoy an even better position than the Israelite priests since their rotational system meant that they rarely served in the Temple, as was the case with Zacharias (Lk. 1:8). In contrast, we will serve eternally. I personally do not feel priestly, but "with God all things are possible" (Matt. 19:26); therefore, I believe in His imputed grace.

Further blessings are available through Christ's care (Rev.1:9-11), His presence (v.12-16), and His victory (v.17-18). Throughout the Old and New Testaments, God inspired His writers to give believers hope and assurance that He is near "to all that call upon Him in

truth" (Ps. 145:18). We draw comfort from our Father's love, compassion, and provisions, knowing that He has the "very hairs of [our] heads" numbered and even knows when a sparrow falls (Matt. 10:29-31).

Lastly, Christ's description is symbolically portrayed in verses 13-16. "Gold" and "brilliance" refer to His holiness and precious worth; "seven" to His perfection; white to His cleansing power; "lamb's wool" to His sacrifice on the cross; and the "blazing fire" and "sharp, two-edged sword" to His judgment. Additionally, His attire signifies His priesthood; the "voice as the sound of many waters," His authority; and "Son of Man," His humanity.

How can we not be overwhelmed with John's portrait of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior! Visualizing this symbolism is limited by our finite inability to understand the fathomless depth of God's infinite being. We are human; He is God. No wonder John fell at God's feet as dead! (v.17).

England is a member of First Church, Grenada.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

How Can I Resist Temptation

Luke 4:1-13

By James Walters

Many deny the devil's existence. Some are convinced he is real. Billy Sunday is credited with saying, "I know the devil is real for two reasons. The Bible says so, and I've had dealings with him." Many of us would agree for the same reasons. We resist Satan's efforts to manipulate our life, yet there are those who make little effort to resist since their sinful natures are in such prominent positions of control and leadership in their life. They choose not to say no to temptation.

We have to recognize that a lot is at stake every time temptation comes our way. The cumulative effect of our choices shapes us. We become one thing by giving in. We become another by resisting.

Which outcome results, is a matter of choice. An old George Jones ballad makes the prominence of choice primary.

"I've had choices since the day that I was born.

There were voices that told me right from wrong.

If I had listened, I wouldn't be here today,

Living and dying with the choices I've made."

DRIVEN INTO THE WILDERNESS, STONES TO BREAD, LUKE 4:1-4

It was appropriate that Christ be tested and tried. Satan suggested a possible use for Christ's privilege of power. His suggestion was that Jesus use His ability to take care of his cravings for food and drink. Satan wanted to



Walters

influence how Jesus would use His power. Christ would not allow Satan an influential voice in His ministry. We learn that sometimes we shouldn't eat or drink. Hunger and thirst is better if who we become is affected by giving in, and it always is.

ALL THE KINGDOM'S OF THE WORLD, LUKE 4:5-8

The clear destiny of the Son of God is to rule the nations of the world forever. Satan presented Christ with a short cut. "Worship me, and I will give you all the kingdoms of the world," he said. Christ didn't think about the matter long. He refused to accept what would ultimately be His anyway. Jesus chose the redemptive path of cross bearing, over the dubious promises of power from Satan.

Satan is still in the business of trying to convince good people that his way is just as rewarding, just as satisfying.

Shallow people are suckers for the easy way. Folks are persuaded that they are one roll of the dice, one card, one lottery ticket away from having all that their heart can desire. Like a fowler who leads his prey to the trap, Satan is there to lead us down the wrong path one kernel of corn at a time. In the end, however, he shoves the cob down our throat. Why would we ever trust the father of lies to tell the truth?

HIS ANGELS WILL CATCH YOU, LUKE 4:9-12

Jesus was tempted to believe Satan's twist of theology. "Jump off the height, God will catch you." Again Jesus didn't think long. "We don't test God," Jesus said.

We are tempted to believe that we can do any foolish thing we want and because God loves us, He will bail us out of trouble. Let's jump out of or into any silly notion; God's net will catch us if we fall. After 53 years of living I've come to realize that there is no net!

When living in obedience is the furthest thing from our mind, we shouldn't expect God to step in and take away the negative consequences of our own irresponsible choices.

FOR A SEASON, LUKE 4:13

Satan left Christ there in the wilderness, but he had not given up. Other opportunities came later on. Jesus was always facing challenges which sought to define who He was and how He should behave. Satan and sin are tenacious, persistent.

What pack of lies is Satan trying to sell us? How is he trying to get us to use our talent and spend our energies to feed our hungers and thirsts? What foolish thing are we about to jump into or out of? What perverse shortcut is Satan suggesting we should take? Whatever the answers to these may be, we can be sure Satan will be back again and again, waiting for just the right moment.

Walters is member of Temple Church, Hattiesburg.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

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THE BAPTIST Record

D.C. marriage rally scheduled for Oct. 15

WASHINGTON (BP) — Seattle pastor Ken Hutcherson has a vision: one million Christians marching on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., in support of the traditional definition of marriage.

unify Christians in the legal and political battle against same-sex marriage. He also hopes it will serve as a wakeup call for the nation.

"The rally is just for one thing — it is to bring the church together, to allow us to know that we are in this fight together as a church," Hutcherson told Baptist Press, "and we want the politicians to know, 'Don't mess with God's people.' We have been pushed against the wall far enough, and when you start trying to change the definition of marriage, you are completely pulling the whole foundation of America out from under us."

The rally was organized in reaction to court rulings across the country. In May, Massachusetts became

the first state to legalize same-sex marriage, thanks solely to a court order. In recent weeks, a pair of judges in Washington state issued rulings overturning that state's ban on same-sex marriage.

Including Washington, nine states are being sued by those seeking to legalize same-sex "marriage."

Pro-family leaders say that a marriage amendment to the U.S. Constitution is the only

way to preserve the traditional definition of marriage.

"As an African American, I know what it means to stand up," Hutcherson said. "...I want to awaken the church to the responsibility that we have. God has put us here as the salt of the earth. No other institution, no other people group is called the bride of Christ except the church and if the bride of Christ is not standing up for what God has ordained, we should be most miserable and ashamed."

Hutcherson organized a similar rally May 1 in Seattle that drew more than 20,000 people. Organizers had only 30 days to put that rally together, and Hutcherson is hoping for larger attendance in Washington, D.C. The rally will take place some two weeks before the Nov. 2 election.

"We felt that we wanted to continue on to Washington, D.C., to let everyone know ... that the church is going to be voting," Hutcherson said, "and as a politician, you better watch what you vote for and how you vote, because if you don't vote right on this issue, we're going to change your view from your office on Nov. 2."

To help pay for the rally, crimson-colored Mayday for Marriage T-shirts will be sold. The color was chosen for a specific reason.

"When you take a picture, it's going to look like the blood of Christ has covered the D.C. mall," said Hutcherson, who played for the Dallas Cowboys, San Diego Chargers, and Seattle Seahawks before an injury forced him to retire in 1977.

The rally is scheduled to take place from noon to 3 p.m. Scheduled speakers include:

- James Dobson, Focus on the Family.
- Tony Perkins, Family Research Council.
- Alan Chambers, Exodus International.
- Alan Keyes, Republican candidate for the U.S. Senate in Illinois.
- Rabbi Daniel Lapin, Towards Tradition.
- Richard Land, Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.
- Samuel Rodriguez, National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference.
- Anne Graham Lotz, AnGel Ministries.
- Dennis Rainey, FamilyLife.
- Ken Hutcherson, Antioch Bible Church.
- Chuck Colson, Prison Fellowship.

For more information about the rally visit www.maydayformarriage.com. For more information about the national debate over same-sex marriage, visit <http://www.bpnews.net/same-sexmarriage>.

Marriage: One Man, One Woman

He hopes to see that accomplished on Friday, Oct. 15, when a rally — Mayday for Marriage — will take place in the nation's capital. James Dobson, Tony Perkins, Chuck Colson, and Richard Land are among the pro-family leaders scheduled to speak.

Hutcherson, pastor of Antioch Bible Church in Seattle and a former pro football player, hopes the event serves to

NOBTS course strengthening Cooperative Program

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS) has launched a new initiative to promote and strengthen the Cooperative Program (CP) of the Southern Baptist Convention. During the seminary's

Kelley said. "It is the lifeline that makes the ministry of all the entities possible. It is the glue that holds the local church, the state conventions and the national convention together so that Southern Baptists maintain a common identity and mission in spite of our great diversity."

"We want every student to leave the seminary with a strong sense of their Southern Baptist identity and a passionate commitment to participation in the Cooperative Program," Kelley continued. "We hope to raise up a generation of students who will one day take CP to higher levels of support than ever before. We are delighted to partner with the Executive Committee in this project to pass the Cooperative Program torch to the next generation of SBC leaders."

Jerry N. Barlow, dean of graduate studies at NOBTS, facilitated the creation of the CD-based course that utilizes video, graphics and text to create a self-guided learning experience. Along with the CD, students received a folder of informational material including Meet Southern Baptists, The Southern Baptist Convention: A Closer Look, and We Thought You'd Like to Know, supplied by the SBC Executive Committee as well as a synopsis of how the CP impacts individual students.

Students were allotted just over two weeks to complete the course by passing a final examination. The course final will be administered by the seminary's Blackboard electronic learning website.

"We thought that having a required core curriculum course which addressed all of the aspects in a total picture would be helpful to all entering graduate students," Barlow said. "Not only would the course orient new students to NOBTS, but it

would give them greater understanding and appreciation of the history, operation and theological distinctives of our denomination — and also prepare them better to serve in our churches and entities."

In 2003 the SBC Funding Study Committee, a group charged with assessing the financial needs of the SBC and its entities, identified the need for core seminary training in SBC polity, organization and the role of the Cooperative Program, Barlow said. The new course will address much of this need.

"The course is a first for us in its method of presentation through media and print resources in such a dynamic and appealing fashion," Barlow said. "The course will have an added benefit of being able to inform and educate churches about the SBC and the Cooperative Program — and we are excited about that."

Stan Norman, associate professor of theology, occupying the Cooperative Program chair of SBC studies, told the new NOBTS students, "You are already reaping the great benefits from the sacrifices and the contributions of Southern Baptists made through the Cooperative Program."

The CP provides approximately 50% of each graduate student's tuition at the seminary, Norman noted. He encouraged the students to continue the legacy of giving by promoting the CP in the churches and ministries they lead.

In addition to the master's students on the main campus, graduate students at the seminary's extension centers will take the course at a later date. The 16 new students in the master of theology, doctor of philosophy and doctor of musical arts programs this fall will complete a similar CP education course during their orientation next spring.



LEARNING ABOUT CP — New students at New Orleans Seminary view an introductory presentation on the Cooperative Program, Southern Baptists' key lifeline for missions support, from a new CD-based course taught at the seminary. (BP photo courtesy of NOBTS)

mid-August student orientation, 189 new master's-level students enrolled in a required course that details the history of NOBTS, the SBC and the CP, also known as CP Missions. Special attention is given to the 12 SBC entities and how each entity benefits from the \$180-plus million given to the SBC through local church members and state conventions each year. Students also learn how the CP provides significant funding for Southern Baptist missions and ministry endeavors throughout the world.

"The Cooperative Program is both the lifeline and glue of the Southern Baptist Convention," NOBTS President Chuck